



Helping Patients Quit Using Tobacco Products: A Fact Sheet for Healthcare Professionals

Why Encourage Your Patients to Quit Using Tobacco?

As a healthcare professional, you are well versed on the health consequences associated with tobacco use. However, it is important to be sure your patients know that tobacco is the leading *avoidable* cause of cancer and that it accounts for about 30% of cancer deaths in the United States. Tobacco use is also associated with many other types of disease, including coronary heart disease, stroke, emphysema, and bronchitis. Furthermore, the National Cancer Institute estimates that well over 400,000 premature deaths each year are attributable to cigarette smoking *alone*.

Smoking also affects the health of non-smokers. Non-smokers exposed to second-hand smoke are at increased risk for lung cancer and coronary heart disease. Children exposed to tobacco smoke are at an increased risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) as well as a variety of ear and respiratory infections.

Since tobacco consumption is avoidable, most health problems can be alleviated by ending product use. The correlation between cessation and improved health is significant. Studies show that people who quit smoking reduce their risk of lung cancer by 30-50% after 10 years and cut their risk of oral and esophageal cancer in half within 5 years after quitting. No matter how long a patient has used tobacco, they experience health benefits when they stop. It's never *too late*.

What Can You Do To Help?

A valuable and proven part of the self-help process is 1-800-QUIT-NOW, a toll-free access number that links patients to **free** counseling with professional quit coaches in **every** state. When your patients call the *quitline*, they will be directed to a trained professional in their state who will work with them to develop a plan for quitting and to overcome the obstacles often associated with quitting. For instance, the quit coach will suggest ways to identify and manage trigger events that tempt them to smoke or use other forms of tobacco while quitting. It may take several attempts, but research indicates having a meeting with your patient will increase the chances that they will quit permanently.

1-800-QUIT-NOW is a service of the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For information online go to www.1800quitnow.org or www.smokefree.gov.

Information about hours of operation and services offered by the quitline in your state can be found at www.naquitline.org



Free Call – Free Quit Coach – Free Quit Plan

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669; TTY 1-800-332-8615) is a service of the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
and your state

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